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and p. 160). Curiously enough Hadassi (*Eshkol ha-Kofer*, 41c) derives Abū 'Īsa's interdiction of wine and meat מִמֵּאֵמֶר הַנֶּאֱמָר עַל בְּנֵי יוֹנָדָב בֶּן רִכָּב. But this reference to the Rechabites which is not found in Kīrkisānī may as well be the individual conjecture of Hadassi.

BONFIRES ON PURIM

The custom of burning Haman in effigy was recently discussed at some length by Ginzberg, *Geonica*, II, 1 f., and Davidson, *Parody in Jewish Literature*, 21, note 33. To the data collected by these scholars I should like to add two references from Arabic sources which prove the existence of this custom among the Jews of Asia and Africa in different periods. Al-Bīrūnī of Khwārisim (died 1048 C. E.) in his *Chronology of Ancient Nations* (text ed. Sachau, p. 280; Sachau's translation, p. 274), in speaking of the fourteenth of Adar, says: "There is great joy over the death of Hāmān on that day. This feast is also called the *Feast of Megillā*, and further *Hāmān-Sūr*." For on that day they make figures which they beat and then burn, imitating the burning of Hāmān. The same they practise on the fifteenth." The famous Egyptian writer Maḳrīzī (died 1442 C. E.) who, in his work on Cairo, devotes a whole chapter to "the Calendar and the Festivals of the Jews" makes the following remark in his discussion of the Purim feast (*Khiṭaṭ*, new edition, Cairo 1326 H., IV, 364, line 6 from bottom): وَرُبَّمَا صُورَ بَعْضُهُمْ فِي هَذَا الْيَوْمِ صُورَةً :

¹ Schreiner, *REJ.*, XII, 266, note 2, rightly emends هَامَن سُوَر into هَامَن سُوَر *Hāmān-Sūr*, which designates in Persian "Hāmān-burning."

هَيَّانُ الْوَزِيرِ وَهُمْ يُسَمُّونَهُ هَامَانَ فَإِذَا صَوَّرُوهُ أَلْقَوْهُ بَعْدَ الْعَبَثِ بِهِ حَتَّى

يَحْتَرِقُ "many a time some of them would make at this day a figure of Haimān the Vizier—they call him Hāmān—and when they had made a figure of him, they would play about with it and then throw it into the fire until it is burned." The discrimination between the pronunciation Hāmān and Haimān is probably due to the fact that in the Koran, owing to a misunderstanding on the part of Muhammed, Hāmān figures as an adviser of *Pharao* (comp. Geiger, *Was hat Muhammed aus dem Judentum aufgenommen* p. 156). The Muhammedans, it seems, were for this reason obliged to modify the name of the Vizier of Ahasuerus, in order to distinguish him from his namesake in the Koran. The wording of Maḳrīzī's remark 'apparently implies that this custom was in his time no longer in general practice among the Jews of Egypt.

The above chapter of Maḳrīzī was published and translated by De Sacy in his *Chrestomathy*. In his explanatory notes (vol. I, p. 319) the celebrated Orientalist refers to Basnage's *Histoire des Juifs*, book VIII, chapter 6, in which the latter speaks of this custom as practised by the Jews in the fourth century. The Jews were accustomed to erect a gibbet and hang on it a figure of Haman. In fact, they are supposed to have gone so far as to change the gibbet into a cross and to burn it together with the figure. Theodosius II. prohibited this anti-Christian demonstration putting on it a heavy punishment. Many persecutions are said to have resulted from this Jewish practice. On the anti-Christian character of this custom compare also the additional note in Ginzberg's, *Geonica*, p. 419.

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